



# INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## *Committee Report*

**Public**

**Date of Meeting:** 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**Title:** IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE OF THE  
COUNCIL

**Report of:** THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Report reference:** CS 58/06

**Summary:**

The report summarises the content and purpose of environmental guidance notes to be issued to staff and members.

**Recommendations:**

That committee review the guidance notes and make recommendations on their purpose and content.

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

## **1. BACKGROUND**

An Environmental Working Group made up of officer representatives from each directorate was formed in June. The group's role is to develop, implement and monitor the success of environmental initiatives on a corporate and directorate level.

Since June the group has met on a regular basis. At the group meeting in August it was agreed that notes on good environmental housekeeping in the office environment would prove useful to staff and members, and serve to raise awareness of the City Council's commitment to improving environmental performance. The notes should be succinct offering simple advice in areas such as energy, waste, paper use and procurement. The notes should also indicate measures for monitoring environmental performance.

The group agreed that the guidance notes should be 'launched' alongside a range of environmental measures including the cessation of disposable cup purchasing and improved recycling facilities for office waste.

## **2. CURRENT POSITION**

Drafts of the guidance notes have been presented to the Environmental Working Group and are supported by the Senior Management Team.

A guidance note on travel has been added as travel is a priority in terms of environmental performance.

The notes are currently in text format but the final copy will be attractively designed in a pocket sized A5 format, kept together in a folder. The guidance notes will be printed on recycled paper and issued to all office based staff and members with an accompanying note by the Chief Executive. A copy of the City Council's Environmental Policy statement will also be issued with the guidance notes.

## **3. CONCLUSION**

The guidance notes will serve as an aide memoir to staff and members with the intention that updates and further information be issued as and when needed. The guidance notes present an opportunity to communicate simple messages and measures for improving environmental performance and form the basis for communicating more detailed guidance in the future.

Following the incorporation of comments from the committee, the final designed copy will be launched in early December.

## **Environmental Performance – Guidance Notes**

In line with Carlisle City Council's key priority of "Cleaner, Greener, Safer" the following guidance notes have been put together which we hope will be useful in helping to make our offices and way we use them more environmentally friendly.

### *Why should we bother to be environmentally friendly?*

As an organisation, the City Council uses resources, generates waste and produces carbon dioxide emissions, the major greenhouse gas. Almost everything we do in an office environment from using a computer to throwing away paper has a negative environmental impact and a cost. As an organisation and as individuals we have a responsibility to try and manage and so reduce that environmental impact. Making our offices more environmentally friendly is a shared responsibility and is about managing the resources we have.

### *How do we become more environmentally friendly?*

These guidance notes offer some simple tips for making our offices more environmentally friendly. Many tips can apply to us individually but in some cases, you will have to work as a team. If you have team meetings, use that as an opportunity to discuss any ideas you have for making improvements. Having 'champions' who are willing to take responsibility for organising and communicating good environmental practice is also recommended. This could be as simple as putting up posters to remind people about actions they should be taking to reduce their environmental impact.

## **Directorate Environmental Representatives**

Representatives from each directorate meet regularly as the Environmental Working Group with the aim of implementing initiatives to improve our 'in-house' environmental performance. The Environmental Working Group is championed by the Chief Executive.

Mike Battersby – Community Services (Chair)  
Mark Beveridge - Community Services  
Les Tickner – Community Services  
David Kay – Community Services  
Pauline Goodridge – Development Services  
Don Taylor – Development Services  
Malcolm Mark – Corporate Services  
Clare Liddle/Jo Pointing – Legal & Democratic Services  
Janet Wainwright – People Policy & Performance  
Catherine Hedley (Unison)

### **Environmental Performance Team**

Rachel Osborn  
Toby Harling

## Energy

Our offices need to be heated, cooled and illuminated. We all rely on computers, printers, photocopiers, faxes and other equipment to do our work, all of which need power. With energy costs rising there is a growing pressure to reduce our energy consumption.

Aside from energy being expensive, most of our electricity is generated from the burning of fossil fuels, the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions including carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). To give an example, in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2005/06 the Civic Centre produced 659.2 tonnes, the crematorium 354.6 tonnes and Bousteads Grassing 243.9 tonnes, the equivalent to around 700 cars travelling 20,000 kilometres per year. A target of a 3% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions has been set across these three sites over 2006/07. This will inform a council wide policy on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.

### Office and kitchen equipment

- Use energy saving features on equipment wherever possible. Set your computer monitor to switch off automatically after 15 minutes of inactivity, instead of using a screen saver that uses more power. If you require any assistance contact the IT department.
- When you charge your mobile phone, unplug it when fully charged. It will still draw on power if plugged in.

### Lighting & heating

- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Make good use of natural daylight. It costs nothing and can reduce lighting costs by up to 19% (*Carbon Trust*).
- If the heating is within your control, turn it down rather than opening doors and windows. If you can, check thermostats are only set to 19°C (the recommended office temperature).

### During hot weather

- Wear light clothing
- Close blinds to keep out direct sunlight and keep blinds closed overnight
- Turn lights and equipment off if not needed – these produce unwanted heat
- Use a fan if necessary, but switch off when not required.

### During cold weather

- Wear warm clothing
- Keep doors and windows closed to conserve heat.

### When leaving the office...

*Switching off non-essential equipment in an office overnight saves enough energy to run a small car for 100 miles (The Carbon Trust).* The following should be switched off at the end of the day:

- Computers - a computer left on overnight uses enough energy to print 2,400 A4 sheets of paper! (*Carbon Trust*).
- PC monitors - leaving a PC monitor on all night wastes enough energy to microwave six dinners. (*Carbon Trust*).
- Printers – printers will normally have a power save or standby mode for periods of inactivity however you should turn a printer off at night.
- Photocopiers - a photocopier left on overnight uses enough energy to produce over 1500 copies. (*Carbon Trust*).
- Fans, laminators etc

Don't assume that someone else will switch equipment off. If you think you are the last person to leave the office, turn equipment off.

### And over the weekend...

- Water coolers - it is safe to switch these off at the plug.

## Paper and printing

A total of 5.4 million sheets of paper for printing are used by the City Council each year. This weighs as much as 27.4 tonnes, and requires 466 trees to produce. At this rate, we can only dream of a paperless office but there are simple actions we can undertake to reduce our paper consumption.

### Paper saving and recycling:

- Re-use paper where possible.
- Use e-mail, and voice mail to minimise paper use. Add a line below your e-mail auto signature to ask people to print only if necessary.
- Think before you print, is it necessary to use so much paper?
- Large print jobs (over 20 copies of the same document) should be undertaken by the Print Room at the Civic Centre.
- Rather than using manufactured note pads, make your own out of scrap paper.
- Review regularly your files of paper documents to see whether you still need them. Remember to recycle the documents you no longer need.  
Carry out a journal audit in your office, reduce unwanted journals by circulating one copy around the office and cancel any duplicate subscriptions.
- Only obtain stationery when required. If you find you have stationery that you no longer need, return it back to the store.
- Confidential waste should be placed in the designated bins or bags. Confidential is anything that identifies a person, i.e. name and address, or which may be sensitive to the City Council or other organisations.
- Use the green bins to recycle waste paper. If you need a green bin contact your directorate's environmental representative.

### Equipment use and paper saving:

- Many photocopiers now copy double sided. This feature should be used when copying double-sided documents.
- When printing documents for your own use, change the printing option on your computer to 'faster' printing and 'econo-mode' to save on toner.

### Toner cartridges

- Toner cartridges should be sent back to either the company that supplied them or to a charity that accepts them for recycling. You should have access to a box to place toners in for recycling. Civic centre staff should take them to the IT department.

## Waste

From our own premises, the City Council empties over 1000 large wheelie bins filled with general waste destined for landfill every year. Waste is a big problem and the City Council has a role to play in leading by example. When dealing with waste consider the waste hierarchy options:

1. Reduce (Waste Minimisation)

Waste that is not created in the first place does not need to be reused, recycled or disposed of, and is therefore the most environmentally desirable option.

2. Re-use

Waste re-use involves the multiple use of a product in its original form, with or without reconditioning, for its original or an alternative purpose - e.g. refilling plastic bottles or recharging batteries.

3. Recycle

Using waste materials for manufacturing other products. In this way, value is recovered and waste is diverted from landfill.

Facilities have been provided for recycling waste in our offices. If your site/office does not have facilities to recycle, contact your directorate's environmental representative.

The following should be recycled:

Paper: Envelopes, office paper, clean packaging, magazines, catalogues, newspapers. There is no need to remove plastic windows, staples, adhesives etc., as this is taken care of in the recycling process.

Confidential Waste: Paper documents

Cardboard: Corrugated (thick) and smooth (thin)

Glass: All bottles and jars, any colour

Plastics: (Hard plastics) bottles, margarine tubs, yoghurt pots, food trays, disposable cups

Polythene: Carrier bags, magazine wrappers, sandwich bags

Cans: Steel & aluminium, food & drink

Disposable cups are being phased out and instead re-usable beakers or mugs are to be used. *If every staff member used a disposable cup every day the cups would form a chain 12 kilometres long, enough to link Carlisle with Longtown!*

### Other waste items

New regulations are being introduced to cover the disposal of electronic waste. IT equipment including computers, photocopiers, printers, fax machines and telephones should be collected by the IT department for re-use/recycling. Contact your directorate environmental representative with regards to other broken items like toasters, kettles, microwaves etc.

Equipment in working order or furniture should be treated as follows:

1. Offer it to other City Council offices, you can advertise by e-mail or on the intranet under public folders/staff noticeboard/work.

2. Offer to staff for personal use by inviting bids under the same public folder.

3. Contact Impact Housing, Centre 47 (local housing charity) on 01228 633655. They will collect items for re-use.

## Travel

As well as travelling to the office, we sometimes have to make journeys for council business. Most people use vehicles for their journeys. These vehicles contribute to traffic congestion as well as poorer air quality and emissions. In 2005/06 the council's own business mileage (staff and councillors) totalled a staggering 433396 miles (the equivalent of travelling more than 17 times around the equator) and produced 104 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Means of transport should be chosen subject to practicality in the following order:

- Walk/cycle (pool bikes are now available at the Civic Centre and Boustead Grassing)
- Public transport
- Council owned vehicle
- Own vehicle/hire car

Business travel should be limited to necessary and essential mileage.

Make attempts to car share where possible whether it's to and from the office or during office hours. Before meetings, check who is attending to see if you can share a lift.

For public transport route and timetable information contact 'traveline' on 0870 6082 608 [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

If you need to drive, follow these simple rules:

- Stick to the speed limit. This will help you keep a clean licence and reduce your fuel bill. Cruising at 50mph uses 25% less fuel than at 70mph.
- Drive smoothly – avoid harsh braking and acceleration. Driving aggressively as well as being dangerous, causes more wear and tear on your vehicle, uses more fuel, and causes more pollution.
- Avoid carrying items when you don't need them – the heavier the load in your car, the more fuel that is used.
- Use air conditioning sparingly as it significantly increases fuel consumption.
- Have your car serviced regularly – 90% of badly polluting vehicles can easily be re-tuned.
- Check your tyre pressure regularly – under-inflated tyres are dangerous and can increase fuel consumption by up to 3%.

## Sustainable procurement

Sustainable procurement is a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

As an organisation the City Council purchases everything from clothing to concrete and uses a wide range of services. Detailed city council guidance on sustainable procurement will follow but staff should:

- Commit to and buy from centrally tendered procurement contracts
- Purchase in an environmentally responsible way i.e. only order what you need and specify environmentally friendly products where possible
- Maintain goods and assets during their usable life
- Re-use and recycle products; existing schemes include for example offering furniture for re-use and paper recycling.

*"Government policy is that 'value for money' is not 'the lowest price'. Instead, the optimum combination of whole life costs and quality to meet users' requirements is required". (Sustainability and Local Government Procurement, IDeA).*

Every product and service we procure has an environmental impact at all stages in its life cycle. By using whole life costing we can minimise the environmental impacts of the products and services we buy. Whole life costing provides the means of determining if it is cost effective to invest in a more expensive product initially to reduce the costs in the long term. Things to consider:

- **Direct running costs** – resources used over the life-time of the product or service
- **Indirect costs** – for example the increased use of electricity arising from energy inefficient equipment
- **Administration costs** – for example ordering and invoicing costs of refillable water cooler bottles rather than using piped water
- **Spending to save** – investing in low energy light bulbs to save on lighting costs
- **Potential for recycling** – creating markets for our own waste by buying recycled products like paper
- **Cost of disposal** – paying a premium at the outset to reduce waste, i.e. by choosing a product which is more durable, re-usable and includes disposal costs.

Environmental legislation like the climate change levy and landfill tax also affect procurement decisions. By anticipating future legislation like packaging waste regulations, use and disposal costs can be minimised at the specification stage.



## **Other good housekeeping tips....**

- Report dripping taps, faltering lights etc., to the Buildings Team at Bousteads Grassing.
- Make use of notice boards and the intranet to share information regarding environmental initiatives.

## **Striving for Improvement**

With the help of the Environmental Working Group, the Environmental Performance Team will measure the City Council's environmental impact in areas such as our energy use, waste reduction and travel. This will enable the success of new initiatives to be monitored.

It is intended that appropriate targets for improving the City Council's environmental performance will be set at a corporate and directorate level, and regular reviews will take place in line with the environmental policy statement. Targets will be reported annually and where relevant quarterly.

### **What will be measured and how?**

#### **Buildings energy use**

Gas and electricity consumption figures from our sites will be collated by the Buildings Team and converted to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by the Environmental Performance Team. This will be reported in tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> produced.

#### **Employee & councillor mileage**

Business mileage provided by the Payroll Team will be converted to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by the Environmental Performance Team. Again this will be reported in tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Fleet mileage figures from the Facilities Team will also be converted to CO<sub>2</sub>.

#### **Waste**

Because the City Council produces a wide range of waste materials and they are collected in different ways, it is difficult to apply one unit of measurement to all of it. However for offices the key waste material is paper. Because it is better to reduce paper consumption over recycling it, the volume (kgs) of paper used per directorate will be measured. This information is provided by the Development & Support Manager.

#### **Procurement**

Procurement will be measured in the numbers of initiatives/policies implemented for example the specification of 100% recycled paper. This will be informed by the Development & Support Manager.

